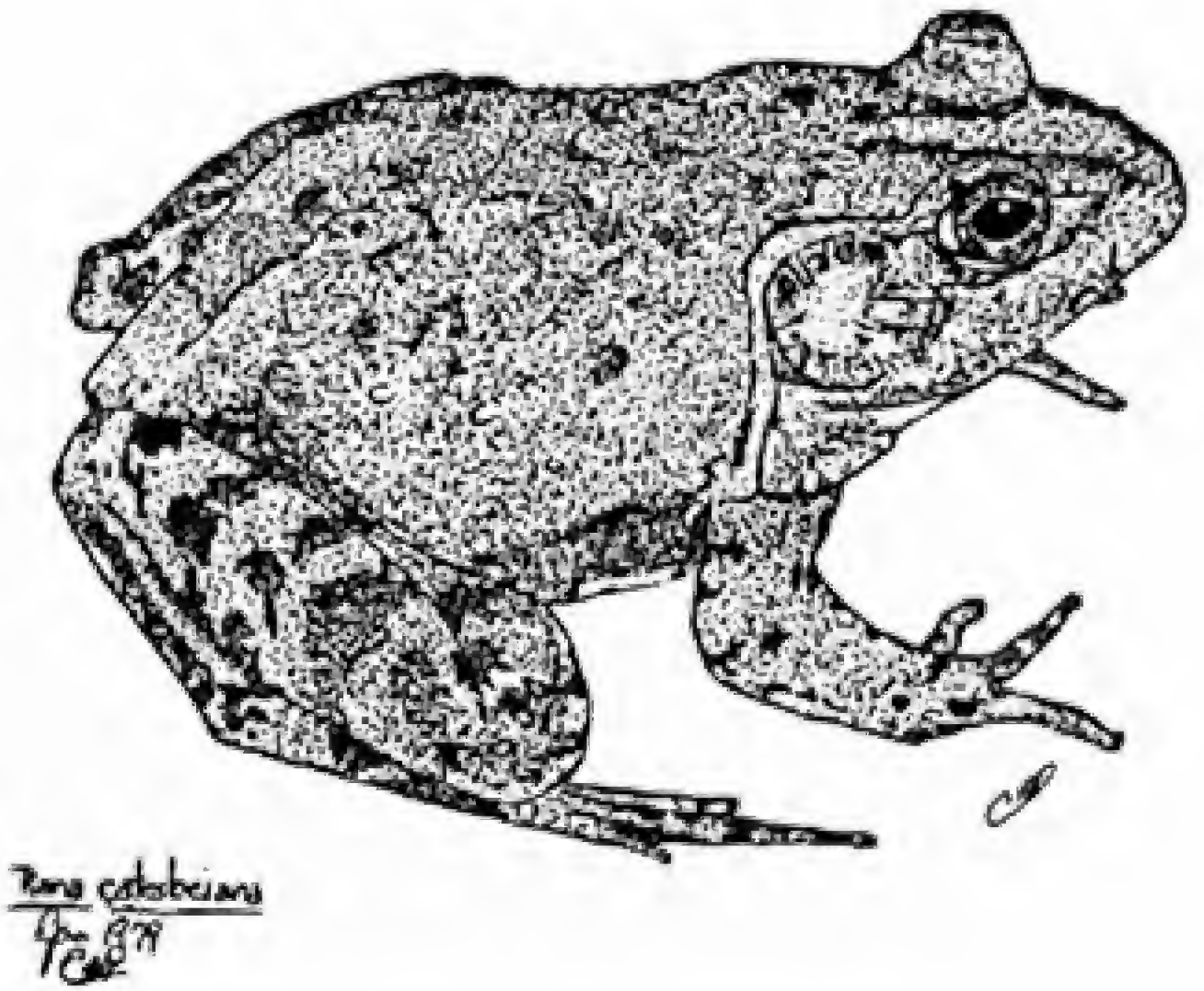
CATESBEIANA



BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ISSN 0892-0761

Volume 18 1998 Number 2

BULLETIN INFORMATION

Catesbeiana is published twice a year by the Virginia Herpetological Society. Membership is open to all individuals interested in the study of amphibians and reptiles and includes a subscription to *Catesbeiana*, two newsletters and admission to all meetings. Annual dues for regular membership are $10.00 (see application form on last page for other membership categories). Payments received after September 1 of any given year will apply to membership for the following calendar year. Dues are payable to: Shay Garriock, VHS Secretary/Treasurer, 8622 Chapel Hill Road, Cary, NC 27513.

HERPETOLOGICAL ARTWORK

Herpetological artwork is welcomed for publication in *Catesbeiana*. If the artwork has been published elsewhere, we will need to obtain copyright before it can be used in an issue. We need drawings and encourage members to send us anything appropriate, especially their own work.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The principal function of *Catesbeiana* is to publish observations and original research about Virginia herpetology. Rarely will articles be reprinted in *Catesbeiana* after they have been published elsewhere. All correspondence relative to the suitability of manuscripts or other editorial considerations should be directed to Dr. Steven M. Roble, Editor, *Catesbeiana,* Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, 217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor, Richmond, VA 23219.

Major Papers

Manuscripts being submitted for publication should be typewritten (double spaced) on good quality 8½ by 11 inch paper, with adequate margins. Consult the style of articles in this issue for additional information, including the appropriate format for literature citations. The metric system should be used for reporting all types of measurement data. Computer diskettes (preferably in WordPerfect format) are desired for longer papers. Submissions concerning the herpetofauna of selected areas, such as a state park or county, should be prepared in article rather than field note format. Articles will be refereed by the editor and at least one other qualified reviewer. All changes must be approved by the author before publication; therefore, manuscripts must be received by the editor before the first of March and September to be considered for publication in the spring or fall issue, respectively, of *Catesbeiana*. Reprints of articles are not available to authors; however, authors may reprint articles themselves to meet professional needs.

(Editorial policy continued on inside back cover)

CATESBEIANA

Bulletin of the Virginia Herpetological Society

Volume 18 Fall 1998 No. 2

Contents

Records of Amphibians and Reptiles from
Fort Lee, Prince George County, Virginia
Steven M. Roble and Christopher S. Hobson.....35

El Niño and January Herp Activities
Walter Bulmer and Mike Cherok.....43

Field Notes.....45

Species List from Spring 1998 VHS Survey.....55

Revised Editorial Policy.....56

VHS Field-Study Grants.....58

President's Corner.....59

Minutes of the Spring 1998 VHS Meeting.....62

Treasurer's Report.....65

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting.....66

Fall 1998 Meeting Notice.....68

1998 Membership List.....71

Next Meeting
October 31, 1998
Maymont Park, Richmond
See page 68 for details

Hyla gratiosa mjp'98

Records of Amphibians and Reptiles from Fort Lee, Prince George County, Virginia

Steven M. Roble and Christopher S. Hobson
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

In 1993, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage was contracted to conduct surveys for endangered, threatened and rare plants and animals on the Fort Lee Military Reservation in Prince George County (Van Alstine and Fleming, 1994). The herpetological component of the surveys targeted the state endangered tiger salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*), and the state threatened Mabee's salamander (*Ambystoma mabeei*) and barking treefrog (*Hyla gratiosa*). Although none of these species was documented on the base, we recorded 21 other species of amphibians and reptiles during our surveys as discussed below.

Fort Lee Military Reservation is a relatively small installation, covering only 5,430 acres (2,198 hectares). It is situated near the Appomattox River between the cities of Hopewell and Petersburg. Slightly more than half of the base has been developed for residences, office buildings and other structures; a golf course also exists on the site. The remaining land is used primarily for military training exercises. The largest tract of relatively undisturbed land lies at the northern end of the base (north of Route 144) and covers more than 800 acres (324 hectares). It includes a forested firing range and a small airstrip that is bordered by grassland habitat. Several ephemeral ponds are scattered throughout the loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*)-dominated forest. The most significant ponds for breeding amphibians are located in the northeastern portion of the firing range. A ditch along the edge of the grassland was also used for breeding by several amphibian species.

Blackwater Swamp, a sluggish tributary of the Blackwater River, lies along the southeastern boundary of Fort Lee. Much of this wetland is traversed by a gas and electric right-of-way, resulting in open marsh habitat. Several active beaver ponds were present in the right-of-way. The hardwood forest within the swamp is comprised of red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sweet gum

(*Liquidambar styraciflua*), black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) and various oaks (*Quercus* spp.). Although the Blackwater Swamp was very wet in the spring (>1 m deep in parts), water levels dropped throughout the summer. Most of the right-of-way was dry by late August. Except for a few remnant pools, the entire swamp (including the beaver ponds) had completely dried out by late September. On 30 September 1993, we observed a large bowfin (*Amia calva*) attempting to move overland between two small remnant, algal-choked pools (one was formerly a beaver pond) that were about a meter apart. This primitive fish, which is capable of aestivating in the ground during drought conditions like sirens (*Siren* spp.), was common in the Blackwater Swamp. However, it was not reported from Prince George County in the monumental treatise on Virginia's freshwater fishes by Jenkins and Burkhead (1993).

The Blackwater Swamp portion of Fort Lee is used infrequently for light military training exercises; it is also visited by employees of the public utility companies who periodically engage in right-of-way maintenance activities (which include bush-hogging). It may also be used by military personnel during the hunting season. A few ditches, swales and isolated ponds (some are old borrow pits) are also present in other portions of the base. Many of these habitats, as well as numerous previously flooded road ruts, were dry (or nearly so) by late June during 1993. We did not sample along Bailey Creek, a second order stream that traverses much of Fort Lee, or in the Appomattox River, along which the military owns a very short section of shoreline.

We made periodic visits to Fort Lee from late April to late September during the 1993 field season. Most of our surveys occurred in June and July, and were concentrated in the Blackwater Swamp area. We also visited the firing range and adjacent airfield area on several occasions. Primary sampling methods included minnow trapping, dipnetting, and listening for calling frogs and toads. We made relatively little effort to sample for terrestrial species of amphibians and reptiles.

An annotated list of the amphibians and reptiles that we recorded on Fort Lee follows. Voucher specimens (deposited in the Virginia Museum of Natural History) were obtained only for those species marked by an asterisk; several other species were photographed.

AMPHIBIANS

*Eastern Lesser Siren (*Siren intermedia intermedia*). One specimen was captured on 2 July in a minnow trap set in a marshy section of the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way. It was dead and partially decomposed when found; we believe that it may have been regurgitated by one of several northern water snakes (*Nerodia sipedon*) that were also in the trap. This is the first record for the lesser siren from Prince George County. The distribution of this species in Virginia remains poorly known (Pague and Mitchell, 1987; Mitchell, 1991; Roble, 1995; Mitchell and Roble, 1998). Owing to the degraded condition of this specimen (total length ca. 20.5 cm), we found it virtually impossible to obtain an accurate costal groove count. Therefore, we opted to x-ray the specimen to aid our identification. On the basis of repeated counts, we concluded that the siren had either 33 or 34 thoracic vertebrae (its vertebral column was broken in the cloacal region), thus confirming its identification as *Siren intermedia* (Conant and Collins, 1991). Additional minnow trapping or dipnetting earlier in the year undoubtedly would have yielded more specimens of this cryptic species.

*Two-toed Amphiuma (*Amphiuma means*). Several specimens were captured in minnow traps set in the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way. This aquatic salamander is apparently common in this habitat, which dries completely in mid to late summer. Tobey (1985) plotted only one previous record for this species in Prince George County.

Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*). Larvae were dipnetted on 2 July at an isolated woodland pond (old borrow pit) near the junction of Routes 36 and 725. This species was not reported from Prince George County by Tobey (1985), but J. C. Mitchell (pers. comm.) is aware of one other unvouchered record from this county.

*Marbled Salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*). Larvae were captured in minnow traps set in the Blackwater Swamp and dipnetted at a seasonal pond in the firing range. Adults were abundant on 29-30 September under logs in the Blackwater Swamp, which was essentially dry on those dates. This species was not reported from Prince George County by Tobey (1985), but J. C. Mitchell (pers. comm.) is aware of three other records from this county.

American Toad (*Bufo americanus americanus*). This species is apparently uncommon on Fort Lee. It was recorded only in the Blackwater Swamp area. Metamorphs were seen on 2 July and adults on 30 September. This species was not reported from Prince George County by Tobey (1985).

Fowler's Toad (*Bufo fowleri*). This toad is common on the base. Numerous metamorphs were observed on 24 June in and near a ditch that parallels a railroad grade north of Route 144. This species was not reported from Prince George County by Tobey (1985), but J. C. Mitchell (pers. comm.) is aware of one other record from this county.

Northern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans crepitans*). Cricket frogs were abundant in the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way, including several beaver ponds. They were also common at ponds in the firing range forest. Several adults of this species were photographed.

Northern Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer crucifer*). This species was common in the Blackwater Swamp area. Metamorphs were observed on 3 June in a ditch bordering the airstrip grassland.

Cope's Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*). Gray treefrogs were common in the Blackwater Swamp area. Several males were also heard calling near the airstrip. Our identification of this species is based on male vocalizations. Gray treefrogs were not reported from Prince George County by Tobey (1985), but J. C. Mitchell (pers. comm.) is aware of two unpublished voucher specimen records for *H. chrysoscelis* from this county.

Green Frog (*Rana clamitans melanota*). Green frogs were common in the Blackwater Swamp, both within and outside of the right-of-way. They were also common at the firing range ponds and the airstrip ditch. Metamorphs were observed on 2 July at a woodland pond near the junction of Routes 36 and 725.

Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*). Bullfrogs were moderately common in the Blackwater Swamp area. Metamorphs (from larvae that had overwintered) were observed on 3 June at the airstrip ditch.

Pickerel Frog (*Rana palustris*). Several were observed on 3 June in the Blackwater Swamp area.

Southern Leopard Frog (*Rana sphenocephala*). Leopard frogs were common throughout the base, being most abundant in the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way. Several adults of this species were photographed.

REPTILES

Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina serpentina*). We obtained several records for this species. Adults were found in the Blackwater Swamp as well as an open pool within a powerline right-of-way near the junction of Routes 36 and 725. A juvenile (approximately 11.5 cm carapace length) was dipnetted on 3 June in one of the firing range ponds.

Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*). Box turtles were common on the base. An adult male fell into an isolated pitfall trap (coffee can) sunk flush with the ground. A road-killed specimen was found on 24 June along a service road leading to the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way. This turtle was apparently crushed by vehicles during right-of-way maintenance activities.

Common Mud Turtle (*Kinosternon subrubrum subrubrum*). An adult was observed on 2 July near a beaver pond in the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way.

Stinkpot (*Sternotherus odoratus*). A hatchling was captured on 30 September in a minnow trap set in a small ponded area within the forested portion of the Blackwater Swamp. This was the only notable area of standing water remaining in the swamp on that date.

Eastern Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta picta*). A road-killed specimen was found on 28 June along a service road leading to the Blackwater Swamp right-of-way. This turtle was apparently crushed by vehicles during right-of-way maintenance activities. Another adult was observed on 29 September in a remnant pool within the swamp.

*Northern Water Snake (*Nerodia sipedon sipedon*). This species was abundant in the Blackwater Swamp; seven adults were observed on 28 June

in a marshy section within the right-of-way. One was also observed at a seasonal pond in the firing range forest.

Rough Green Snake (*Opheodrys aestivus*). A subadult was found on 26 April several hundred meters north of the golf course in a small seepage swamp along an unnamed tributary of Bailey Creek. The snake was approximately 1.5 meters above the ground in a sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*).

Mole Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis calligaster rhombomaculata*). A road-killed adult was found at 1015 h on 2 July near the east end of the golf course on the main road that bisects this area. The specimen was not saved.

Discussion

Prior to our surveys of Fort Lee, the herpetofauna of Prince George County was moderately well known (Tobey, 1985; Mitchell, 1994). Both of these authors plotted numerous records in the northwestern portion of this county that were obtained on or near the base. Curiously, however, Tobey (1985) did not record a single species of toad (*Bufo*) for Prince George County, and Joseph C. Mitchell (pers. comm.) was aware of only one unpublished record for *B. fowleri* from this county prior to our surveys. We recorded both *B. americanus* and *B. fowleri* on Fort Lee, with the latter being more abundant and widespread.

Fort Lee is a small military base and its habitats are much less diverse or unusual than those of Fort A. P. Hill, a much larger military installation in the Coastal Plain of Virginia (Caroline County), which supports a rich herpetofauna (Mitchell and Roble, 1998). Our total of 21 species at Fort Lee (as compared to 57 for Fort A. P. Hill) is certainly an underestimate of the herpetofaunal diversity of this base. We did not attempt to inventory the entire herpetofauna of Fort Lee, and thus many common species (e.g., chorus frogs, red-spotted newt, worm snake, garter snake, black rat snake, black racer) that undoubtedly inhabit the base were not recorded. Other species that were missed, such as the southern two-lined salamander (*Eurycea cirrigera*), probably inhabit Bailey Creek, a habitat that we did not sample. We also failed to record any lizards or woodland salamanders (*Plethodon*) during our surveys, primarily because of our heavy focus on aquatic habitats. The apparent absence of the spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) on Fort Lee may also

be due to inadequate sampling. Our most significant find was the new county record for the lesser siren.

Acknowledgments

This study was funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. We thank Elmer Stewart and Carol Anderson of the Fort Lee Natural Resources Office for their assistance. Dr. T. Michael Burke of the Feline Medical Center and Canterbury Veterinary Hospital in Richmond kindly allowed us to x-ray the specimen of *Siren intermedia*. Joseph C. Mitchell provided comments on the manuscript.

Literature Cited

Conant, R. and J. T. Collins. 1991. A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America. Third Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, Massachusetts. 450 pp.

Jenkins, R. E. and N. M. Burkhead. 1993. Freshwater Fishes of Virginia. American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, Maryland. 1079 pp.

Mitchell, J. C. 1991. Amphibians and reptiles. Pp. 411-476 *in* K. Terwilliger (coord.). Virginia's Endangered Species. McDonald and Woodward Publishing Company, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Mitchell, J. C. 1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington, D. C. 352 pp.

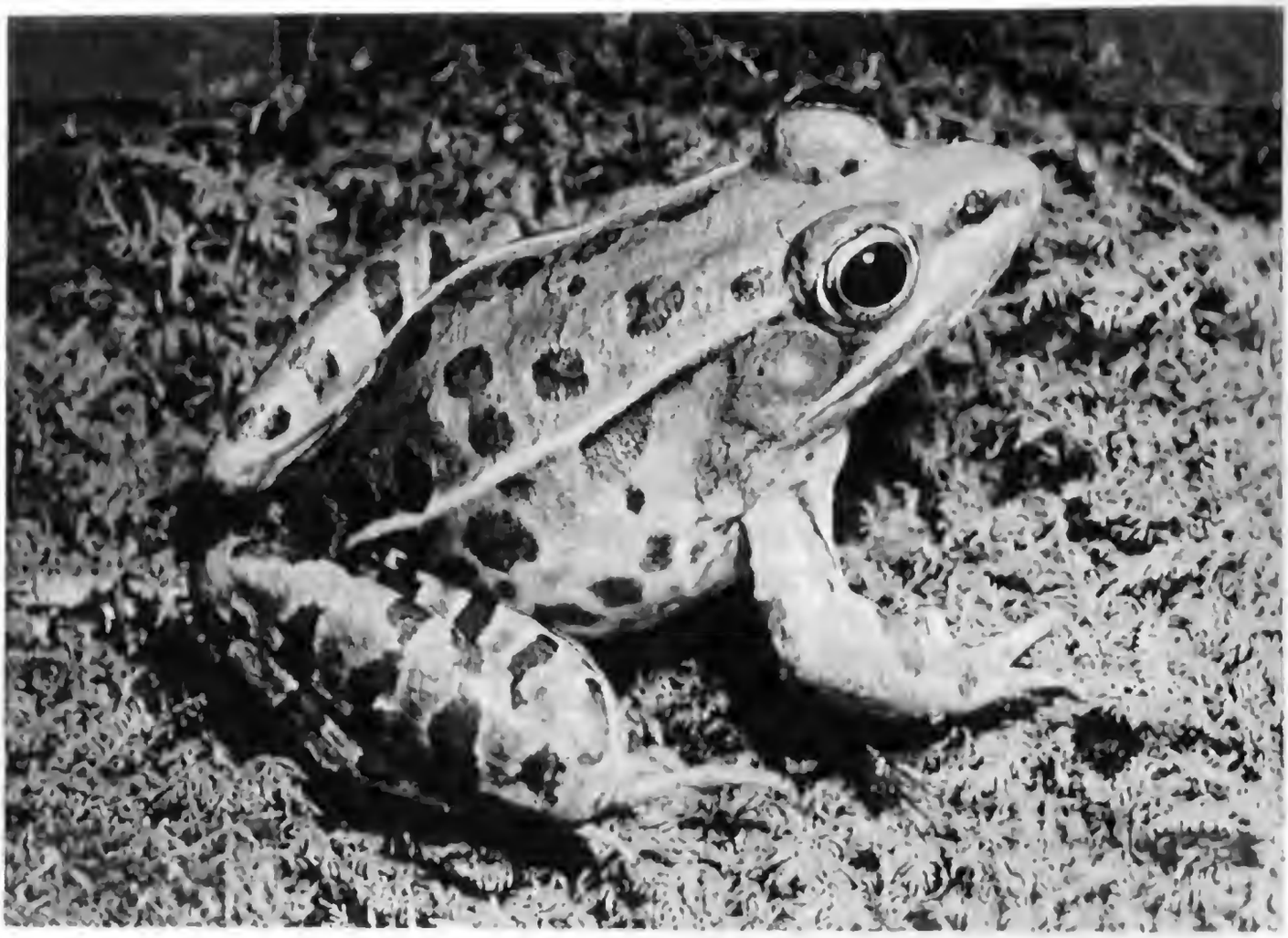
Mitchell, J. C. and S. M. Roble. 1998. Annotated checklist of the amphibians and reptiles of Fort A. P. Hill, Virginia, and vicinity. Banisteria 11: 19-32.

Pague, C. A. and J. C. Mitchell. 1987. The status of amphibians in Virginia. Virginia Journal of Science 38: 304-318.

Roble, S. M. 1995. Geographic distribution: *Siren intermedia intermedia*. Herpetological Review 26: 150-151.

Tobey, F. J. 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey, Virginia Herpetological Society, Privately Printed, Purcellville, Virginia. 114 pp.

Van Alstine, N. E. and G. P. Fleming. 1994. A Natural Heritage Inventory of Fort Lee, Virginia. Natural Heritage Technical Report 94-4. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, Virginia. 56 pp. plus appendices.



Rana sphenocephala from Fort Lee (photograph by Steven M. Roble)

El Niño and January Herp Activities

Walter Bulmer
Northern Virginia Community College
Biology Department
8333 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, Virginia 22003

Mike Cherok
7105 Barry Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22310

An unusual warm and humid weather pattern, believed to be related to the global weather phenomenon known as El Niño, affected Virginia from 4-7 January 1998. The low temperatures stayed in the upper 50's (° F) and low 60's, while the daytime highs were in the upper 60's. The humidity rose to 100% each day. Fog blanketed the area in the morning. Intermittent mist continued day and night throughout the period. Virtually no sustained sunlight occurred during this four-day weather pattern.

During this period, black rat snake *(Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta)* activity was observed at a hibernaculum along the Dyke Marsh trail, George Washington Parkway National Park, Alexandria, Fairfax County, Virginia. The den consists of a 2 m long pile of fill covered with soil about 1 m high adjacent to the trail. This raised area of fill is covered with vines and is surrounded by a 5 m tall understory. The riparian forest of sweetgum, swamp birch, sycamore, tulip poplar and choke cherry has a 30 m canopy with an abundance of old snags.

Bulmer discovered this black rat snake den in March 1997 while surveying the amphibians, reptiles and mammals of Dyke Marsh. During warm, spring days, as many as six rat snakes could be observed sunning in the vegetation up to 5 m above the den site. Five snakes were observed in the brush and understory on 5 January 1998. The temperatures were in the mid 60's and humidity reached 100%. Three large snakes that were suspected to be females coiled at different positions from 2.5 to 4 m above ground. Two smaller snakes moved higher into the understory and were suspected to be males (Ernst, 1989). Pre-copulatory behavior exhibited by these smaller snakes included "head-bobbing", "tongue-flicking" and undulating their bodies with a jerky motion as they slithered over the larger females (Schulz, 1996). No copulation was observed. The snakes remained fairly active,

changing positions over the next three days, but generally remained about 3 m up in the understory. Snakes were observed from 0800 h until dark (1800 h). It is possible that they remained above ground overnight.

During the morning of 7 January 1998, the weather pattern began to change with the cloud cover breaking and both humidity and temperature dropping. The smaller snakes began to descend towards the den site before the larger snakes. One of the presumed males was observed entering the burrow at 1130 h. As the temperature dropped into the lower 50's, all snakes returned to the hibernaculum by early afternoon. No snakes were observed above ground on subsequent visits during the winter.

During the same time period as discussed above, spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) were heard calling from their hibernating sites. They called fairly frequently from scattered localities in a wooded section of Springfield, Fairfax County, Virginia. Calls were heard during both day and night. The temperature and humidity remained high throughout the period.

Other evidence of black rat snake activity during this warm spell was a road-killed specimen found on 4 January 1998 along County Route 1501 in Westmoreland County, Virginia. It had moved approximately 2.5 m from a pine forest adjacent to the road.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank Ms. Melissa Champion of the National Park Service, George Washington Memorial Parkway, for supplying the permits to collect on this property. We are indebted to Dr. Dave Johnston and the Washington Biologists' Field Club for their grant which made possible our research in Dyke Marsh.

Literature Cited

Ernst, C. H. and R. W. Barbour. 1989. Snakes of Eastern North America. George Mason University Press, Fairfax, Virginia. 282 pp.

Schulz, K.-D. 1996. A Monograph of the Colubrid Snakes of the Genus *Elaphe* Fitzinger. Tanneweg, Würselen, Germany. 439 pp.

FIELD NOTES

Elaphe guttata guttata (Corn Snake). VA: Lancaster Co., State Rt. 354, 1.3 km SW junction State Rt. 201. 19 May 1997. Faye Ferrall.

A road-killed corn snake was found at 2145 h on 19 May 1997. The next day I returned to the spot to more accurately determine the location and found the remains of yet another corn snake. This was the third road-killed corn snake that I had observed on this road within a two-week period. I also found a corn snake in my front yard several years ago (exact date not recorded); it was photographed and released. Mitchell (1994. The Reptiles of Virginia, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.) does not record the corn snake from Lancaster County; his only record for the Northern Neck is an unvouchered sighting in Westmoreland Co. A photograph of the snake found on 19 May is being deposited with the Virginia Museum of Natural History as a voucher.

Faye Ferrall
P.O. Box 293
Kilmarnock, VA 22482

Nerodia sipedon sipedon (Northern Water Snake). VA: City of Alexandria, Huntley Meadows Park, 0.25 km SW junction of Cedar and Heron Trails. 18 April 1998. Timothy R. and Michele L. Brophy.

On the morning of 18 April 1998, we observed a mating pair of *Nerodia sipedon sipedon* on a large clump of mud and grass within 3 m of a boardwalk which crosses a freshwater wetland at Huntley Meadows Park. Both snakes were completely out of the water and fully exposed to bright sunlight. The average temperature on this date was 13° C, with a high of 17° C and a low of 9° C (National Airport-Washington, D.C.; National Weather Service).

The mating behavior of these northern water snakes was consistent with the description given by Mushinsky (1979. Mating behavior of the common water snake, *Nerodia sipedon sipedon* (Reptilia, Serpentes, Colubridae) in eastern Pennsylvania. Journal of Herpetology 13: 127-129). The snakes were already in the process of copulation when we approached them at 1100 h.

The male was positioned left of and parallel to the longer, thicker-bodied female. The chin of the male rested on the dorsum of the female slightly anterior to the midpoint of her body. The posterior region of the male was coiled around the female in a position consistent with copulation. Both snakes remained essentially motionless except for an occasional movement of the head or tail by the male. At 1130 h the male released the female and retreated into the water. The female also proceeded into the water and the snakes departed in opposite directions.

According to Mitchell (1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.), mating *N. s. sipedon* have been observed in Virginia between 17 April and 12 June. The current observations occurred only one day later than the earliest observed mating in Virginia. This is not surprising, however, as the winter of 1997-1998 was one of the warmest on record for the Washington D.C. area. The average monthly temperatures for December 1997 (5.0° C), January 1998 (6.1° C) and February 1998 (6.5° C) were 0.9, 4.7 and 3.4° C warmer than normal, respectively (National Airport-Washington, D.C.; National Weather Service).

Timothy R. Brophy
Department of Biology
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

Chrysemys picta picta (Eastern Painted Turtle). VA: Smyth Co., South Fork Holston River at Buller Fish Cultural Station. 29 April 1998. Scott J. Cooney.

At approximately 1300 h, an eastern painted turtle was found foraging on aquatic vegetation in a drain pipe at the Buller Fish Cultural Station near Marion. Weather conditions were overcast and cool (~16° C), with little to no wind, and sporadic light rain. The turtle measured 26.4 mm carapace length, 25.1 mm plastron length and weighed 5.5 g. Mitchell (1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.) did not record this species from Smyth County; his nearest records were from Wythe County to the east. Because non-native fish species are regularly brought to the station, it is possible that this turtle population is the result of

an accidental introduction. Further surveys outside of the station would help to determine the range of this potentially localized population. Based on its size and the date of capture, the specimen was a hatchling, possibly indicating that reproduction is occurring in the area. However, there have been no observations of nesting or egg laying, even though several adult painted turtles are present at the station (personal observation). The specimen has been donated to the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Scott J. Cooney and Michael J. Pinder
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
2206 South Main Street, Suite C
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Hemidactylium scutatum (Four-toed Salamander). VA: Scott Co., Jefferson National Forest, Cove Creek Mine off Co. Rt. 722, along Cove Creek. 27 March 1996. Christopher S. Hobson, John MacGregor and James Kiser.

The range of the four-toed salamander includes scattered records throughout much of Virginia west to Floyd County with one isolated record from extreme western Scott County (Roble, S. M. and C. S. Hobson. 1995. Geographic distribution: *Hemidactylium scutatum*. Herpetological Review 26: 41; Roble, S. M. and C. S. Hobson. 1995. Records of amphibians and reptiles from the Clinch Ranger District, Jefferson National Forest. Catesbeiana 15: 3-14). These records represented a new county record that partially filled in the range gap between Virginia and Kentucky depicted in Conant and Collins (1991. A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America. Third Edition. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts. 450 pp.).

On the night of 27 March 1996, John MacGregor, James Kiser and I found an adult female *H. scutatum* brooding eggs beneath a sphagnum mat in a headwater seepage near the Cove Creek Mine in Scott County. The salamander was released at the site of capture after a brief examination. We encountered no additional specimens despite a thorough survey of the area. The Cove Creek Mine site is approximately 14.5 km SW of the Scott County collection site reported by Roble and Hobson (op. cit.) and

represents only the second known site for this species west of Floyd County in Virginia. However, this species is found commonly in eastern Kentucky, particularly in association with mine benches (J. MacGregor, pers. comm.). Additional surveys in southwestern Virginia (specifically at abandoned mine sites) will most likely show this species to be more common and widespread than current knowledge suggests.

Christopher S. Hobson
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Pseudacris brachyphona (Mountain Chorus Frog). VA: Giles Co., Jefferson National Forest, forest service road 201 off Bland Co. Rt. 606, along Dismal Creek. 15 June 1998. Steven M. Roble and Christopher S. Hobson.

The range of the mountain chorus frog includes southwestern Virginia, where it has been recorded from Giles and Montgomery counties west to Scott and Wise counties (Hoffman, R. L. 1981. On the occurrence of *Pseudacris brachyphona* [Cope] in Virginia. Catesbeiana 1: 9-13; Tobey, F. J. 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey, Virginia Herpetological Society, Privately Printed, Purcellville, VA. 114 pp.; Roble, S. M. and C. S. Hobson. 1995. Records of amphibians and reptiles from the Clinch Ranger District, Jefferson National Forest. Catesbeiana 15: 3-14). Hutchison (1956. An annotated list of the amphibians and reptiles of Giles County, Virginia. Virginia Journal of Science 7: 80-86) did not find this species during his surveys in Giles County, but Hoffman (op. cit.) later plotted two records in this county. However, Tobey's (op. cit.) subsequent atlas included only one record for *P. brachyphona* in (central) Giles County.

On the evening of 15 June 1998, we heard scattered males (about 10 total) of this species calling along a 2 km section of forest road 201 (extending as far west as the turnoff to the White Pine Horse Camping Area) in the extreme southwestern portion of Giles County. They were calling from both the forested hillside above the road and along a shallow ditch bordering the

road's edge. After several futile attempts to locate calling males on the hillside, we secured two specimens that were calling in the ditch. Both vouchers have been deposited in the Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH 8785-8786). Following our discovery, we learned that Richard Hoffman (pers. comm.) has heard mountain chorus frogs calling in a grassy ditch near Big Walker Creek (the next major stream to the south of Dismal Creek), 1.2 km W jct. State Rt. 42 and State Rt. 100 (no voucher specimens collected) in Giles County. Farther south, Hoffman (op. cit.) reported that on the night of 22 March 1974 he was never out of range of calling males along Little Walker Creek (County Rt. 601) in Pulaski and Bland counties (the latter was erroneously reported and mapped as Wythe County) from Interstate 77 eastward to State Rt. 100, a distance of about 35 miles (56 km). Despite numerous surveys spanning several decades, he has never found *P. brachyphona* east of State Rt. 100 in either Giles or Pulaski counties (Hoffman, op. cit.; R. L. Hoffman, pers. comm.).

Steven M. Roble and Christopher S. Hobson
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Eumeces anthracinus anthracinus (Northern Coal Skink). VA: Alleghany Co., Solomons Run shale barren, George Washington National Forest, off Co. Rt. 616, ca. 2.9 km ENE Boiling Springs. 24 February 1996. Dirk J. Stevenson and William H. Moorhead III. VA: Bath Co., South Sister Knob (south face) near headwaters of White Sulphur Spring Branch, George Washington National Forest, off Co. Rt. 627, ca. 8.5 km S Williamsville. 29 April 1998. Steven M. Roble and Anne C. Chazal.

The coal skink is the rarest member of the genus *Eumeces* in Virginia. This species was first reported from the state by Richard L. Hoffman (1944. *Eumeces anthracinus* [Baird] in Virginia. Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington 57: 122-124), who found it at two sites near Clifton Forge in the northeastern part of Alleghany County. Hoffman (1986. The herpetofauna of Alleghany County, Virginia, Part 3. Class Reptilia. Catesbeiana 6: 4-10) provided additional information on the occurrence of

coal skinks in this county, noting that he had not found any specimens in recent years, including return trips to his previously documented sites. Mitchell (1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington, D. C. 352 pp.) plotted only seven locality records for this species in six Virginia counties. Roble (1994. Field notes: *Eumeces anthracinus anthracinus*. Catesbeiana 14: 40-42) and Hayslett (1994. Field notes: *Eumeces a. anthracinus*. Catesbeiana 14: 43-44) provided two more records for the coal skink, noting that both sites were xeric habitats characterized by the presence of shale.

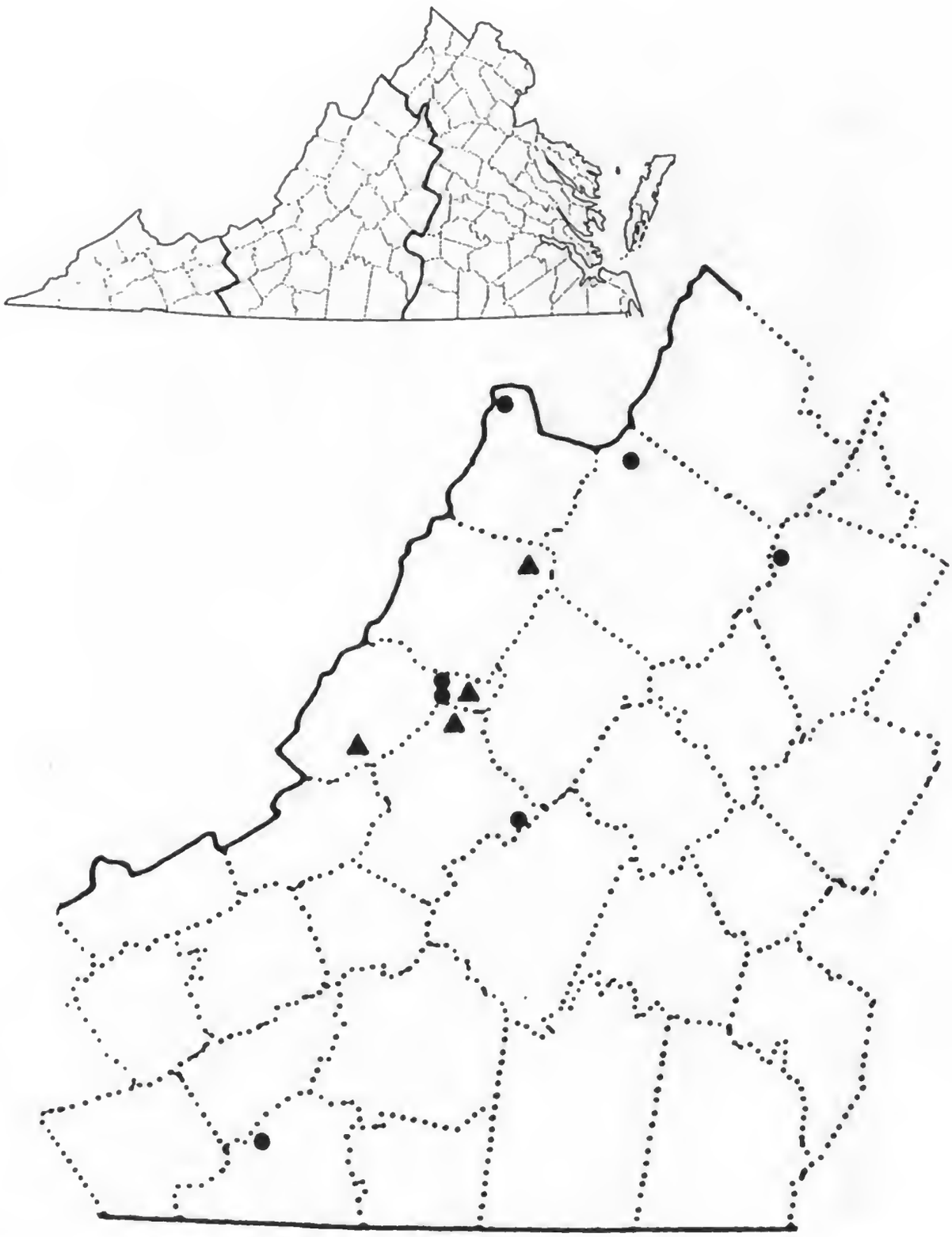
Our recent surveys of additional shale habitats in the mountains of Virginia have resulted in the documentation of two new localities for the coal skink. A subadult (VMNH 8444) was collected at 1500 h on 24 February 1996 at the Solomons Run shale barren in southeastern Alleghany County. It was active on the surface of a south-facing shale slope; the weather conditions were clear and sunny, with an air temperature of approximately 18° C. This is the earliest seasonal record for the coal skink in Virginia (Mitchell, op. cit.). At approximately 1600 h on 29 April 1998, an adult female coal skink was found near the base of an oak tree within 30 m of White Sulphur Spring Branch (a tributary of Stuart Run); she was photographed and released. This is a new record for Bath County (Mitchell, op. cit.); a voucher slide will be deposited in the VHS archives (see accompanying photograph also). The site was on a southeast facing slope in a mixed hardwood forest located near several shale ridge balds.

The recent, sudden increase in the number of known localities for the coal skink in Virginia suggests that it is not as rare as previously thought. The secretive habits of this species have probably caused it to be overlooked in the past.

Steven M. Roble, Dirk J. Stevenson[1] and Anne C. Chazal
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

[1]Present address: DPW, ENRD, Fish and Wildlife Branch, AFZP-DEV-W, Fort Stewart, GA 31314

Adult female *Eumeces anthracinus anthracinus* from South Sister Knob, Bath County, Virginia (photograph by Steven M. Roble)



Distribution of the northern coal skink (*Eumeces anthracinus anthracinus*) in Virginia. Solid circles are records plotted by Mitchell (1994); triangles are more recent records.

Chelydra serpentina serpentina (Common Snapping Turtle). VA: Pulaski Co., Radford Army Ammunition Plant, New River Facility, Dublin. 17 April 1998. Shay Garriock. VA: Isle of Wight Co., Cat Ponds, 5 km S Benns Church. 3 June 1998. Steven M. Roble.

Ernst et al. (1994. Turtles of the United States and Canada. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington, D.C. 578 pp.) stated that the snapping turtle is "one of the more aquatic species of turtles" in North America. Basking out of water (= aerial or atmospheric basking) by this species is relatively rare (Ernst et al., op. cit.; Mitchell, J. C. 1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington, D.C. 352 pp.; Palmer, W. M. and A. L. Braswell. 1995. Reptiles of North Carolina. The University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill, NC. 412 pp.). Ernst et al. (op. cit.) believed this is due to an intolerance of high temperatures and rapid loss of moisture. Most snapping turtles apparently bask while floating at the water surface (Ernst et al., op. cit.; Palmer and Braswell, op. cit.). Aerial basking is more common in northern populations, as evidenced by a study conducted in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada by Obbard and Brooks (1979. Factors affecting basking in a northern population of the common snapping turtle, *Chelydra serpentina*. Canadian Journal of Zoology 57: 435-440). These authors encountered snapping turtles basking out of water 95% of the time, as opposed to only 5% for aquatic basking. Aerial basking sites used by snapping turtles include logs, rocks and shorelines (Obbard and Brooks, op. cit.; Palmer and Braswell, op. cit.). Very rarely does more than one snapping turtle occupy the same basking site (Ernst et al., op. cit.; Obbard and Brooks, op. cit.).

We have observed snapping turtles in Virginia basking occasionally on logs, beaver lodges and the shorelines of ponds and rivers. However, we believe the following observations of aerial basking by this species are somewhat unusual. At 1315 h on 17 April 1998, Garriock observed two adult snapping turtles (both were approximately 30 cm in carapace length) at a distance of 20 m basking in an eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) snag near the center of a 0.2 ha spring-fed pond. Both individuals were facing north and resting on dead branches on either side of the main stem, approximately 0.25 m above the water surface. The tree extended about 3 m above the water. When the turtles detected the observer, they pushed themselves over the stiff

branches using all four legs, and fell into the water. The air temperature at the time of these observations was not recorded.

At 1645 h on 3 June 1998, Roble observed a subadult snapping turtle (carapace length ca. 20 cm) basking atop the jagged stump of a black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) tree at the edge of a semipermanent pond, approximately 1.3 m above the water surface. Both its head and tail were facing downward. The turtle must have climbed nearly vertically to reach its basking site, although there was a short ledge on the shore side of the stump. The pond side of the stump was rotted out and unclimbable. The turtle did not move when approached to within 2 m and was initially thought to possibly be dead. It remained motionless as the observer retreated, but was gone when he returned 0.5 h later with a camera. Weather conditions were clear and breezy, with an air temperature of about 30° C.

Steven M. Roble
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Shay Garriock
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
2206 South Main Street, Suite C
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Spring 1998 VHS Survey

On May 15-17, 1998, the Virginia Herpetological Society surveyed the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area near Saltville, Virginia. Overall, 28 species, including 18 amphibians and 10 reptiles, were found during the survey. A full manuscript will be published in the next issue of *Catesbeiana*. The following is the species list:

Amphibians (18 species)

Salamanders (13 species)

Aneides aeneus	Green salamander
Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis	Eastern hellbender
Desmognathus fuscus fuscus	Northern dusky salamander
Desmognathus monticola	Seal salamander
Desmognathus ochrophaeus	Mountain dusky salamander
Eurycea cirrigera	Southern two-lined salamander
Eurycea longicauda	Longtailed salamander
Gyrinophilus porphyriticus porphyriticus	Northern spring salamander
Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens	Red-spotted newt
Plethodon cinereus	Redbacked salamander
Plethodon glutinosus	Northern slimy salamander
Plethodon richmondi	Ravine salamander

Anurans (5 species)

Bufo americanus	American toad
Pseudacris crucifer crucifer	Northern spring peeper
Rana catesbeiana	Bullfrog
Rana clamitans melanota	Green frog
Rana palustris	Pickerel frog

Reptiles (10 species)

Turtles (4 species)

Apalone spinifera spinifera	Eastern spiny softshell
Chelydra serpentina serpentina	Common snapping turtle
Graptemys geographica	Common map turtle
Terrapene carolina carolina	Eastern box turtle

Snakes (6 species)	
Agkistrodon contortrix mokasen	Northern copperhead
Diadophis punctatus edwardsii	Northern ringneck snake
Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta	Black rat snake
Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum	Eastern milk snake
Nerodia sipedon sipedon	Northern water snake
Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis	Eastern garter snake

Revised Editorial Policy

With this issue, I begin my tenure as the editor of *Catesbeiana*. On behalf of the VHS, I would like to thank Paul Sattler for serving as the primary editor for the past 17 issues of the journal. My experience in producing the current issue has made me acutely aware of the time commitment, as well as the need to pay close attention to minor details. I have no illusions of retaining this position as long as Paul did.

I have extensively revised the text appearing on the inside front and back covers of *Catesbeiana* and encourage all members, particularly prospective authors, to read these pages. The major changes that I am attempting to implement are: (1) peer review of selected articles and field notes; (2) stricter enforcement of the new county record documentation policy that was adopted in 1991 and first published in *Catesbeiana* 11(2), page 47; (3) requiring prospective authors of field notes to explain the significance of their observations; and (4) publishing good quality black and white photographs of relevance to articles or field notes. With regard to item 2 above, it has been brought to my attention by Dr. Joseph C. Mitchell that some of the voucher specimens reportedly collected in support of county records that were published in past issues of *Catesbeiana* still have not been deposited in museums. Therefore, beginning with this issue, *Catesbeiana* will not publish these types of records until the specimens have been formally donated to a permanent museum (e.g., Virginia Museum of Natural History; National Museum of Natural History [Smithsonian Institution]). Photographs

submitted in support of new county records must be labelled (county, location, date, observer) and clearly identifiable to species. If I cannot personally verify the original identification, I will send the photograph to one or more experts for their opinions regarding the identity. The record will be accepted only after the identification has been confirmed.

As editor, I will provide critical reviews of all articles and field notes submitted to *Catesbeiana*. I will also seek additional peer reviews for selected submissions as deemed appropriate. Reviewers will not be limited to current VHS officers. In addition to critical reviews, I will also make minor editorial changes that are intended to improve the quality and consistency of writing. All proposed changes must be approved by the author(s) prior to publication. Any articles or field notes that I personally prepare will be reviewed by at least one qualified person. I would like to thank Anne C. Chazal, Richard L. Hoffman and Joseph C. Mitchell for providing reviews of several articles and field notes that appear in this issue.

In an attempt to ensure the timely production of *Catesbeiana*, I am instituting deadlines of March 1 and September 1 for the receipt of manuscripts and other items for inclusion in the spring and fall issues, respectively. I encourage submissions at any time during the year, particularly well in advance of these deadlines. In addition to unsolicited submissions, I will actively seek articles and field notes from prospective authors whenever I learn of an interesting observation, distributional record, field survey or research project that is appropriate for publication in *Catesbeiana*. As usual, we are always in need of good herpetological artwork. Finally, I welcome your thoughts on other ways by which we can strive to make this journal as good as that of any other regional herpetological society.

Steve Roble
Editor

Guidelines for VHS Field-Study Grants

The purpose of Field-study Grants from the Virginia Herpetological Society is to stimulate and encourage herpetological research in Virginia. These Grants will be in variable amounts up to $200.00 and are available to VHS members who do not have access to other sources of funding, such as institutions of higher learning and government grants.

Grant requests should include a description of the proposed research, or in the case of surveys the extent of the geographic area to be surveyed, and the methods which are to be used. A rough budget would be helpful. A brief justification of the importance of the work in contributing to the knowledge of Virginia's herpetofauna, citing standard works (e.g., Mitchell, J. C. 1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp. and Tobey, F. J. 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey. Virginia Herpetological Society, Privately Printed, Purcellville, Virginia. 114 pp.) should be included. The results of all funded surveys must be submitted in manuscript form for publication in *Catesbeiana*.

Grant requests will be received by the current President until March 15 of each year. The President will then send copies to Executive Committee members by the end of March, and a Committee vote will be scheduled sometime during the annual Spring meeting. The Executive Committee will first determine that funds are available, and then that the Grant request is worthy of funding. A majority ruling is required for both votes. When a grant is approved, the Secretary/Treasurer will so inform the recipient, send a check for the amount determined by the Committee, and inform the recipient of the requirement to publish the results in *Catesbeiana*.

President's Corner

It's been an exciting year, VHS! There has been so much going on in Virginia. The spring field trip was a terrific experience for myself and other attending members. The weather finally cooperated for excellent survey conditions. Most noteworthy was the abundance of salamanders. One site yielded over 100 salamanders in one hour. In fact, I was able to add the Jordan's and green salamanders to my life list. The find of an eastern hellbender and spiny softshell turtle was a pleasant surprise to many members. Although the terrain at Clinch Mt. WMA was tough, everyone had an enjoyable time. See the species list in this issue and the full write-up in the spring issue of *Catesbeiana*.

As most of you are already aware by now, House Bill 38, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' funding initiative was passed unanimously by both houses of the General Assembly. Starting in the year 2000, the Department will receive an additional 12 million dollars annually for capital improvements, law enforcement, and wildlife conservation. The monies will be from a portion of the sales tax on wildlife-related items that in the past were simply directed to the state's treasury. The extra funds will not only be from traditional hunting and fishing items, but will include such non-traditional items as binoculars and outdoor recreational gear. About half of the funds will come from these non-traditional sources. I am not exaggerating to say that the passage of the bill would not have been possible without the support of the Department's non-traditional constituents. However, don't kick your heals up too soon – our work is not over yet. We now have the critical mission to make sure that the nongame program and reptile and amphibian projects receive their fair share. We will only accomplish this by continued letter writing and contacts. Letters to the Department's Director, Board of Directors, Secretary of Natural Resources, your local Delegates, and the Governor are essential in securing these funds. Indicate to them that as a taxpayer you think it's time to see adequate funding for all wildlife. To make an analogy to the current football season, we have made a spectacular reception and now it's time to score the touchdown.

During the spring meeting, I brought forward several amendments to the membership. Although these amendments were printed in the summer newsletter, I feel it would be best to clarify and elaborate on these changes

to our constitution. The first amendment, an addition to Article IV, will allow dues paid after September 1st to be accredited to the following year. The purpose of this amendment was the result of individuals paying for membership at our fall meeting and getting little in return because membership is based on a calendar year. For those who have not paid for a new calendar year, you will be mailed the dreaded reminder card. Just send in your dues and nobody gets hurt.

The second amendment is more or less a house-keeping measure. You may have recognized the old VHS logo on newsletters and T-shirts. The logo has a black rat snake and a marbled salamander. According to our constitution, our logo should be a spotted salamander, and both the snake and salamander should be placed outside of the state's boundaries. A spotted salamander is now being drawn to replace the marbled salamander. The constitution will be amended to move both the salamander and snake into Virginia. I know this may sound trivial, but the changes are necessary and must be presented to the membership.

The final amendment was Article V, to create a fund for student lodging. As I mentioned in the last President's Corner, students have a difficult time financially attending our events. At the last meeting, I proposed an amendment to establish a fund that will help augment lodging costs for students coming to our spring meeting and field trip. Depending on the monies available in the fund, the VHS will pay up to 50% for two nights of lodging. If the fund cannot cover the full 50%, the VHS will pay proportionally to the number of students paying for lodging. So how will we pay for this great experiment? The answer is by the sale of T-shirts, bumper stickers and raffle tickets. Therefore, the more items we sell, the more money will be available for student lodging. When you buy these items, you will know that you are encouraging students to become involved in the VHS. All amendments will be voted on at the fall business meeting.

Final preparations are being made for the VHS anniversary extravaganza. On October 31st, the VHS will be celebrating its 40th anniversary at Maymont Park in Richmond. New for this event is a photo/art contest for members and their families. See the last newsletter for entry requirements. T-shirts, books and a wealth of other raffle items have already been donated.

Unlike most past meetings, lunch will be part of the day's festivities. A symposium, Reptile and Amphibian Conservation: Past, Present and Future will be the main feature. The list of speakers sounds like the herpetological "dream team." The symposium will feature Frank Tobey, a VHS founding father and secretary from 1958-1979. Frank was the sole individual responsible for establishing the society. Dr. Ronald Heyer, Curator of Amphibians at the Smithsonian Institution and editor of Measuring and Monitoring Biological Diversity: Standard Methods for Amphibian Populations, a must for all herpetologists, will be discussing the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force. William "Marty" Martin, an authority on the timber rattlesnake, will be discussing the management and conservation of this unique species. Long-time member, past president of VHS and author of Reptiles of Virginia, Dr. Joseph Mitchell will be speaking on reptile and amphibian conservation in Virginia. We will wrap up the meeting with the VHS birthday party. Everyone, members and nonmembers alike, is encouraged to register early; however, registration at the door will also be available. Please see the registration form in the last newsletter. Remember you only turn 40 once, so I look forward to seeing you there. Until then, I wish everyone good health and happy herping.

Mike Pinder
President

The current VHS logo, which is proposed for revision, appears below:

Minutes of the VHS Spring Meeting
Saltville, Virginia
May 15, 1998

The meeting was begun at 1902 h by Mike Pinder, VHS President. Minutes from the Fall Meeting in 1997 were not available for review. 17 members were counted present.

1903 h: Shay Garriock, Secretary/Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report entailing all VHS receipts and disbursements since the account was transferred to him from Mike Hayslett in February of 1998. The total balance on hand was reported to be $3127.58. Copies of the report were handed out to all members present.

1909 h: Paul Sattler, Journal Editor, reported that 200 copies of *Catesbeiana* Volume 17(2) had been produced at a cost of $199.07. The bulletin had been sent out to membership (151), and the remaining copies would be given to Shay Garriock for further distribution.

1912 h: Mike Pinder, Newsletter Editor, reported that Volume 8, No. 1 of the VHS newsletter had been sent out to membership. The materials and postage costs were $150.00. Mike also reported that the next newsletter will be completed in July of 1998.

1916 h: Mary Rybitski, Membership Committee, recalled that, at the Fall Meeting, she had suggested three techniques to increase VHS membership, these being: 1) a contest between members to solicit new memberships, 2) free membership donation requests, and 3) posters presenting attractive information about VHS membership. The idea of membership posters received the greatest interest from members during the Fall Meeting. Over the winter, Mary had developed and printed 60 membership posters at a cost of $1.00 each. She handed out posters to attending members for distribution at schools, libraries, etc.

1922 h: Mike Pinder requested discussion of unfinished business, but no matters were brought to the floor.

1924 h: Discussion of new business. Bob Greenlee, VHS President Elect, reported that he was still searching for a location to hold the 1998 Fall

Meeting. So far, it had been decided by the VHS officers that the location would be in Richmond, Virginia, but a specific location had not been chosen. Maymont Park was the most desirable location, however the cost would be in excess of $300. Available dates at Maymont were October 31 and November 14. Attending members offered the following suggestions for alternative locations: The University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the Virginia Living Museum, and Three Lakes Nature Center in Henrico County. Mary Rybitski also suggested that the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) was another possible meeting place. Bob Greenlee brought up the possibility of a catered lunch for the meeting, however it was mentioned that there may not be a large enough attendance to justify the size and cost of a catered meal. The issue was left open. Mike brought a motion to the floor concerning a "VHS Achievement Award" to be presented to a (anonymous) deserving VHS member at the Fall Meeting. The motion was accepted and voted upon unanimously in favor. A second motion was brought to the floor concerning the establishment of a "VHS Annual Achievement Award Plaque" for distinguished VHS members. The motion was modified by attendees to "development of criteria" for an Achievement Award Plaque, and was voted on unanimously in favor. New member Scott Cooney volunteered to develop these criteria.

1945 h: Mike Pinder announced a proposal to the VHS Constitution that would modify the VHS Seal. The amendment would increase the relative size of the snake and salamander within the seal arc. There was further discussion about a special VHS 40th Anniversary Logo to be printed on the new t-shirts and possibly coffee mugs. A motion followed to create single edition T-shirts and coffee mugs with a 40th Anniversary logo, and was voted on unanimously in favor by those attending. The purchase of coffee mugs, however, would be left to the discretion of VHS Officers depending on available VHS treasury funds.

2004 h: Mike Pinder gave a brief overview of progress on the "Snakes of Virginia" brochure, still awaiting development and publication. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) will provide $19,000 for development of the brochure. The Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR) has donated $500 in exchange for

acknowledgment in the brochure. The VHS will provide an additional $50 towards brochure costs. Mike also requested that photographs of Virginia snakes be donated by members for possible publication in the pamphlet.

2008 h: Mike Pinder began discussion on two additional constitutional amendments to be proposed by VHS Officers in the next newsletter. These proposals were, briefly: 1) the addition of two sections to Article VI of the "BY-LAWS", VHS Membership Dues, and 2) the establishment of Article X, section 1 of the "BY-LAWS", Student Lodging Fund. The proposals were recited by Shay Garriock. The Student Lodging Fund would cover a percentage of VHS meeting lodging fees for students, as an incentive to increase student membership and participation. A great deal of discussion ensued among those present concerning criteria development for the Student Lodging Fund, namely identification of funding sources, grant money limitations to applicants, and number of recipients per application. The issue was left open for further discussion during the Fall Meeting.

2015 h: Shay Garriock described the proposed additions to Article VI concerning membership dues.

2025 h: A motion was brought to the floor by Mike Pinder concerning a Fall Meeting Photo Contest.The motion was seconded and voted on unanimously in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030 h.

Shay Garriock
Secretary/Treasurer

Treasurer's Report, May 15, 1998

Balance on hand January 1998	**$4730.14**
Receipts:	
Membership dues	$ 896.50
T-shirt sales	$ 30.00
Book sales	$ 45.54
Auction	$ 43.00
Donations	$ 6.50
Unknown from 1997	$ 63.50
Savings account earned interest	$ 6.94
Total receipts	$1091.98
Total	**$5822.12**
Disbursements:	
Postage for *Catesbeiana* and newsletters:	$ 175.33
Books	$ 238.50
New and old T-shirts (Vernal Pool Association)	$1330.00
Office supplies and mailing list computer software	$ 122.68
Paul Sattler [reimbursement for fall meeting refreshments, postage and printing costs for *Catesbeiana* Vol. 17(2) and Vol. 18(1)]	$ 405.00
Returned check service charge	$ 15.00
Long distance phone calls (membership discrepancies)	$ 27.50
500 bumper stickers	$ 360.53
VDGIF collection permit	$ 20.00
Total disbursements	$2694.54
Total	**$3127.58**
Balance on hand May 15, 1998	$3127.58

The society has a current membership of 151
New members in 1998 = 15

Shay Garriock
Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes of the VHS Executive Committee Meeting
Forest, Virginia
June 30, 1998

Members present: Mike Pinder (President), Bob Greenlee (President Elect), Paul Sattler (Immediate Past President), Shay Garriock (Secretary/Treasurer)

The meeting was opened at 1014 h by Mike Pinder to discuss relevant VHS issues.

1015 h: Discussion of Fall Meeting planning: Those present agreed that Maymont Park would be the most suitable location for the meeting. Shay disbursed $100 to Bob to secure the Maymont Park meeting facility. Mike expressed that he would like to continue with the Teacher's Workshop, and discussion followed concerning possible speakers and an educator for the workshop. All present agreed that a $10 workshop fee would be necessary to help cover facility costs, and that workshop publicity should be increased to boost attendance. A catered lunch, so members would have a better opportunity to eat as a group, was suggested; lunch would be an additional cost for those attending. All present agreed to have a catered lunch, and to also require a meeting attendance fee to cover catering costs and other miscellaneous costs. Mike brought up his idea of a theme for the meeting: "The Past, Present and Future of Reptile and Amphibian Conservation." Guests speakers would be invited to present their views on one of the three parts of the theme. The question arose as to whether amphibians and reptiles should be discussed separately. This will be dependent on availability of speakers. It was then suggested that officers seek out donations for the raffle: businesses that give donations will receive recognition at the meeting and in the next newsletter.

1100 h: Shay gave a report on the status of a new batch of t-shirts ordered from the Vernal Pool Association. An order had been placed for 51 shirts of various sizes, but he had not received them yet. Shay also agreed to determine setup and printing costs for a small quantity of 40th Anniversary coffee mugs.

1118 h: Discussion of VHS Lifetime Achievement Award: To be presented at the Fall Meeting to a deserving member.

Minutes

1134 h: Discussion of proposed amendments to VHS Constitution:

1. Alterations to VHS Seal to change size and shape of the snake and salamander within the seal arc. An amendment to this portion of the VHS Constitution will be printed in the next newsletter. Paul Sattler agreed to find someone to draw a spotted salamander to replace the marbled salamander currently shown in the seal.

2. Some criteria for development of a Student Travel Fund were listed, these being grant amounts and limitations, fund sources, necessity of an application, medium of award (cash or hotel room reservation), and development of criteria for selection of award recipients.

1148 h: Discussion of Spring Survey location: The following possible locations were suggested by those present: Fort Pickett, Camp Blue Ridge/ Piney River, Lake Moomaw area and Goshen Wildlife Management Area. Bob Greenlee accepted the duty of determining which of these areas are potential survey sites.

1215 h: Meeting adjourned.

Shay Garriock
Secretary/Treasurer

Dues Reminder

Membership in the Virginia Herpetological Society is on a calendar year basis (expires annually on December 31). Please consider renewing your membership for 1999 now (or at least before January 1) to save our treasurer the time and expense needed to mail you a renewal notice. Check the date on your mailing label to determine the year through which you have paid dues. See the last page of this bulletin for the membership application/ renewal form. Save postage by paying your dues at the Fall Meeting if you are planning to attend this exciting event.

Note that Shay Garriock, the VHS secretary/treasurer, has a new mailing address: 8622 Chapel Hill Road, Cary, NC 27513

ANNOUNCEMENT
FALL 1998 MEETING OF THE
VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The VHS will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary on October 31, 1998 at Maymont Park in Richmond. In honor of this event, there will be a symposium entitled, "Reptile and Amphibian Conservation: Past, Present and Future." Several distinguished authorities in the field of herpetology will be speaking at the day's event. A luncheon, raffle and photo contest will be part of the festivities. Maymont opens at 7:30 a.m. and admission is free. A nominal fee will be required to cover lunch, the evening social and facility charges. Preregistration is $3.50 for members and $5.00 for nonmembers. Everyone 14 years old and younger is free. Registration at the door will be $5.00 for members and $7.00 for nonmembers. See the August newsletter for the registration form. Contact Mike Pinder at (540) 552-6992 or email mpinder@dgif.state.va.us for additional information.

MEETING AGENDA

8:00 a.m.	Educational workshop for teachers
10:30 a.m.	Business meeting
12:00 p.m.	Lunch Photo Contest Raffle
1:00 p.m.	Mike Pinder - Introductions
1:30 p.m.	Frank Tobey – Founding of the VHS
2:10 p.m.	Dr. Ronald Heyer - Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force
2:50 p.m.	Break
3:00 p.m.	William Martin – Ecology and conservation of the timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*)

Fall Meeting Announcement

3:40 p.m.	Dr. Joe Mitchell – Reptile and Amphibian Conservation
4:20 p.m.	Evening social Announce photo winners Raffle Tour of Nature Center

The meeting will be held at the Assembly Hall, which is accessed by the Hampton Street entrance (see map). A parking lot is located just outside of the gate. Follow signs provided by VHS.

Directions to Maymont Foundation (Hampton entrance):

From Interstates 64 and 95:

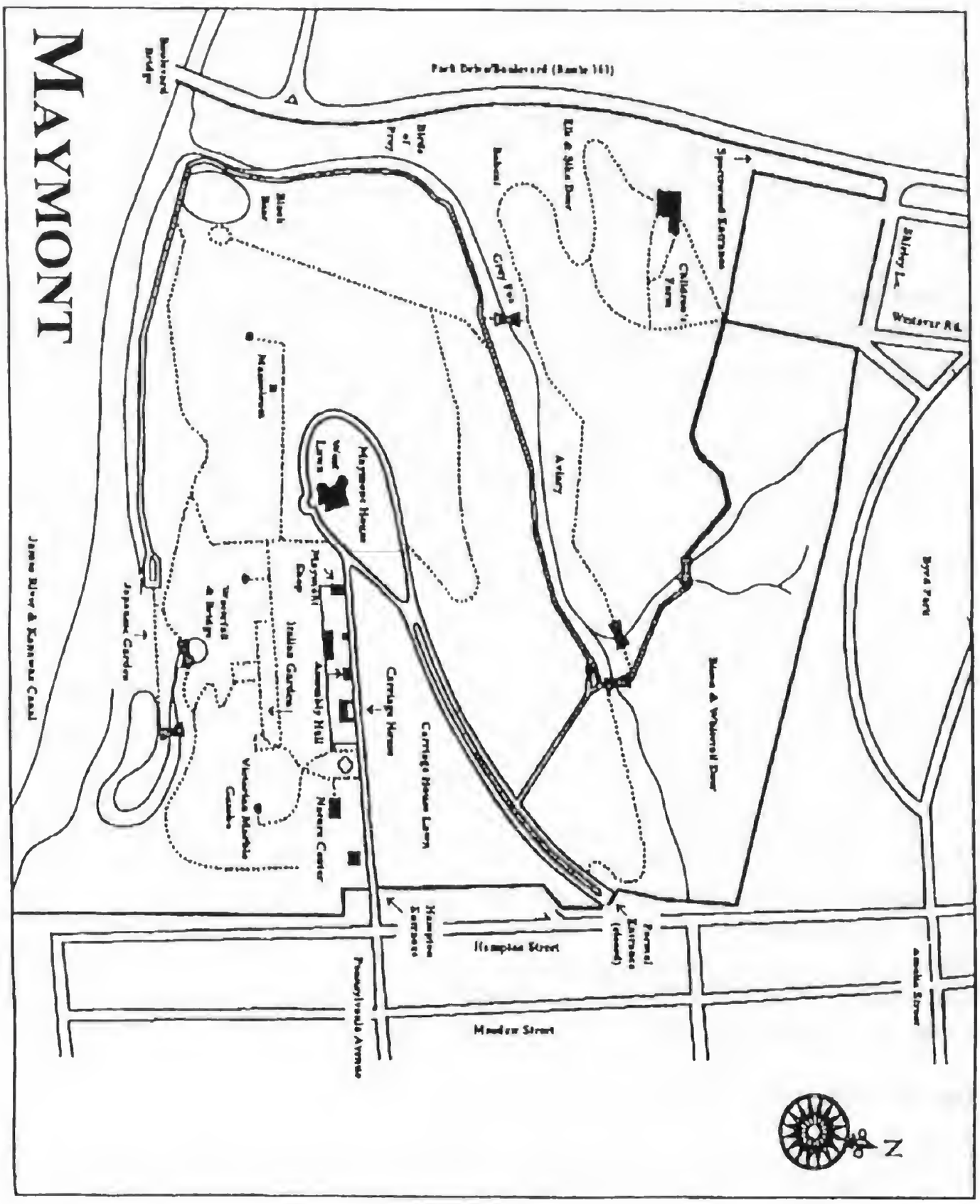
Take the Boulevard exit (#78). Go south 1.5 miles to Cary Street and take a left. Go 0.5 miles to Meadow Street and take a right. Go one mile to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Then go one block to Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.

From the Powhite Parkway:

After the Chippenham Toll Plaza, get in the right-hand lane. Bear right onto 195 East (the Downtown Expressway). Take the Maplewood exit from 195 and bear left onto Maplewood. Go one block to Sheppard and take a right. Go one block and take a left on Grant Street. Go straight into Byrd Park at the Columbus Statue (Grant will turn into Lakeview). Go 0.5 miles to Meadow Street and take a right. Go 0.7 miles to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Go one block into Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.

From the Downtown Expressway:

Take the Meadow Street exit immediately after the toll plaza. Take the first left onto Meadow Street. Go one mile to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Go one block to Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.


MAYMONT
Park Drive/Boulevard (Route 161)
Boulevard Bridge
Birds of Prey
Bison
Elk & Deer
Sportsmans Entrance
Children's Farm
Gray Fox
Black Bear
Mansion
Maymont House and Gardens
Aviary
Japanese Garden
Japanese Bridge
Italian Garden
Maymont Drive
Assembly Hall
Carriage House
Carriage House Lawn
Nature Center
Victorian Marble Garden
James River & Kanawha Canal
Bird & Wildlife Area
Bird Park
Hampton Entrance
Hampton Street
Formal Entrance (closed)
Pennsylvania Avenue
Meadow Street
Allerton Street
Bishop Ln.
Webster Rd.
N

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to _____ initiate _____ renew membership in the Virginia Herpetological Society for the year ____ 1999 ____ 2000 .
(Note: dues received after September 1 are applied to membership for the following calendar year.)

___ I wish only to receive a membership list. Enclosed is $1.00 to cover the cost.

Name _____
Address _____
_____
_____
_____ Phone _____

Dues Category: ____ Regular ($10.00)
____ Family ($12.50)
____ Under 18 ($6.00)
____ Life ($150.00)

Interests: ____ Reptiles ____ Amphibians ____Captive Husbandry
____ Distribution ____ Research
____ Specifically _____

Make checks payable to the Virginia Herpetological Society and send to the treasurer: Shay Garriock, VHS Secretary/Treasurer, 8622 Chapel Hill Road, Cary, NC 27513

Field Notes

This section provides a means of publishing natural history information on Virginia's amphibians and reptiles that does not lend itself to full-length articles. Observations on geographic distribution, ecology, reproduction, phenology, behavior and other topics are welcomed. Field Notes will usually concern a single species. The format of the reports is: Scientific name (followed by common name in parentheses), state abbreviation (VA), county and location, date(s) of observation, observer(s), data and observations. The name(s) and address(es) of the author(s) should appear one line below the report. Consult the editor if your information does not readily fit this format. ALL FIELD NOTES MUST INCLUDE A BRIEF STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RECORD (e.g., new county record) OR OBSERVATION (e.g., unusual or rarely observed behavior, extremely early or late seasonal record, abnormal coloration, etc.). Submissions that fail to include this information are subject to rejection. Relevant literature should be cited in the body of the text (see Field Notes in this issue for proper format). All submissions will be reviewed by the editor (and one other person if deemed necessary) and revised as needed; all changes must be approved by the author(s) before publication.

If the field note contains information on a new county (or state) record, verification is REQUIRED in the form of a voucher specimen deposited in a permanent museum (e.g., Virginia Museum of Natural History) or a color photograph (print or slide) deposited in the archives of the Virginia Herpetological Society. Photographs should be sent to the editor for verification and archiving purposes; the identity of voucher specimens must be confirmed by a museum curator or other qualified person. Include the specimen number if it has been catalogued. Prospective authors of distribution reports should consult Mitchell (1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.) and Tobey (1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey, Virginia Herpetological Society, Purcellville, VA. 114 pp.) to determine if they may have a new county record. Species identification for observational records (e.g., behavior) should be verified by a second person whenever possible.

The correct citation format is: Tobey, F. J. 1989. Field notes: *Coluber constrictor constrictor. Catesbeiana* 9(2): 35.

Photographs

High contrast black-and-white photographs of amphibians and reptiles will be considered for publication if they are of good quality and are relevant to an accompanying article or field note. Submissions should be no larger than 5 x 7 inches and printed on glossy paper. Published photographs will be deposited in the archives of the Virginia Herpetological Society.